

the "play mode" Accordingly, many modifications may be made by one of ordinary skill in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

CLAIMS

5 What is claimed is:

1 A method for controlling user interaction in a digital imaging device having a display using dynamic overlay bars, the method comprising the steps of:

- 10 a) providing the digital imaging device with at least two operating modes, each of the operating modes having at least one mode-specific operation that can be performed on images;
- b) in response to operating in either of the at least two operating modes, displaying at least one overlay bar on the display; and
- 15 c) dynamically updating the at least one overlay bar with both status information and interactive instructions, wherein the interactive instructions guide the user through at least one the mode-specific operation.

2 The method of claim 1 wherein step c) further includes the step of

20 providing the interactive instructions for guiding the user through a directed image capture operation.

3 The method of claim 2 wherein step c) further includes the step of
providing the interactive instructions for guiding the user through a sound annotation
operation.

5 4 The method of claim 2 wherein step c) further includes the step of
dynamically updating the first overlay bar using an application program.

5 The method of claim 4 wherein the digital imaging device includes a
display having a first and a second horizontal sides; step b) further including the step of
10 displaying the at least one overlay bar adjacent to a first horizontal side of the display.

6 The method of claim further 5 including the step of displaying a second
overlay bar adjacent to a second horizontal side of the display.

15 7 The method of claim further 1 including the step of displaying the at least
one overlay bar translucently on the display.

8 A method for controlling user interaction in a digital imaging device using
dynamic overlay bars, the digital imaging device including a display, a first function key,
20 and at least two operating modes for capturing, storing, and reviewing the images, the
method comprising the steps of:

- a) displaying mode-specific information on a first overlay bar that is
displayed translucently over a current image in the display;

- b) displaying a mode-specific function label corresponding to the first function key in a second overlay bar, wherein the mode-specific function label indicates which one of a plurality of predefined functions is assigned to the first function key; and
- 5 c) dynamically changing the mode-specific information and the mode-specific function label during operation of the digital imaging device to automatically guide a user through operation of the digital imaging device.

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The method of claim 8 further including the step of:

- 10 e) automatically changing the predefined function assigned to the first function key and the mode-specific function label based on conditions existing in the digital imaging device.

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The method of claim 9 further including the step of:

- 15 f) manually changing the predefined function assigned to the first function key by pressing a menu key.

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The method of claim 10 wherein step a) further includes the step of:

- a1) providing the current image as a live view image during capture mode.

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The method of claim 11 wherein step a) further includes the step of:

- a2) providing the current image as a previously stored image.

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The method of claim ⁴~~12~~₁ wherein step b) further includes the step of:

b1) displaying the mode-specific function label as a combination of an icon and text.

5 14 A digital imaging device comprising:
 an imaging device for capturing image data;
 a memory coupled to the imaging device for storing the image data as captured
images;
 a display for displaying a captured image;
10 a processor coupled to the imaging device and to the memory for controlling
operation of the digital imaging device and for operating the image device in at least two
operating modes; and
 at least one overlay bar displayed on the display, the at least one overlay bar
including a translucent background and a combination of mode-specific status
15 information and interactive instructions, wherein the interactive instructions
automatically guide a user through a mode-specific operation.

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20 A digital imaging device as in claim 14 further including a set of soft keys,
wherein the at least one overlay bar further displays soft key labels to indicate which
one of a plurality of functions is assigned to the corresponding soft key, wherein in
response to a user pressing a first one of the soft keys, the processor applies the
function assigned to the first one of the soft keys to the first captured image.

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A digital imaging device as in claim ~~6~~
~~15~~ wherein the at least one overlay bar is updated automatically based on conditions existing in the digital imaging device.

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5 A digital imaging device as in claim ~~7~~
~~16~~ wherein the captured image is a live image displayed during a capture mode.

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A digital imaging device as in claim ~~8~~
~~17~~ wherein the captured image is previously captured and stored image.

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